AN UPDATE ON THE WIAA'S IMPLEMENTATION OF I-638

RENTON, WA (November 18, 2026) – Earlier this month, Washington voters approved Initiative 638, a measure limiting participation in girls' interscholastic athletics to biological females. The Washington Interscholastic Activities Association (WIAA) is actively working to ensure alignment with the new law ahead of its December 3 effective date.

With the winter sports season upon us, the WIAA's priority is to provide member schools with updated guidance.

The WIAA Executive Board has the authority to modify WIAA Handbook language to align with Initiative 638 and has approved for WIAA staff to adjust such language by December 3. Additionally, the Association has **updated health and wellness forms**, along with a biological sex attestation addendum to previously approved physical examinations. Students with a current, valid physical examination, along a biological sex attestation, would not be required to get a new physical examination. Determination of biological sex falls outside the WIAA's purview and is a matter best addressed by medical professionals. Schools will remain responsible for determining eligibility, further addressing the importance of providing member schools with updated guidance. The WIAA continues to monitor all legal developments regarding Initiative 638's implementation.

As competition nears along with the effective date of Initiative 638 on December 3, WIAA staff has been frequently asked what sports will be impacted immediately. Those sports include Girls Basketball, Girls Wrestling, Girls Flag Football, Girls Bowling, Girls Gymnastics, and Competitive Cheer. Dance/Drill is not impacted as it is a coed offering and Sideline Cheer is not impacted because there is no competition. Here are the additional sports that would be affected...

Spring: Girls Golf, Girls Softball (Fastpitch), Girls Tennis, and Girls Track & Field

Fall: Girls Cross Country, Girls Golf, Girls Soccer, Girls Softball (Slowpitch), Girls Swim & Dive, Girls Tennis, and Girls Volleyball

Initiative 638's language states that these changes only apply to girls sports offerings; however, a school may choose to collect attestations of biological sex for boys and girls. Once again, that is a school-based decision.

Since transgender participation has become a more prominent topic in recent years, the WIAA's message has remained consistent: **the WIAA must follow state law**. That commitment remains unchanged. To clear up any confusion or misunderstanding, the WIAA does not hold a political position on any measure and will not challenge Initiative 638's implementation. At no point has the Association indicated otherwise. Once again, the WIAA must follow state law.

The WIAA's membership has expressed split views on transgender participation, as demonstrated through the Association's amendment process over the past two years. During that time, three amendments were proposed to modify the WIAA's gender-identity participation policies. Those amendments were labeled as "advisory votes" because their language was determined to conflict with Washington state law at the time. Two of the

three amendments received more than 50% support but did not meet the 60% threshold required for passage. Throughout that process, the WIAA maintained that it must comply with state law.

Additional information and materials have been distributed to WIAA member schools. Due to pending litigation, the WIAA cannot comment further on this matter at this time.

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